

A full and true Account of the Tryals, Examination, and Condemnation of Lewin Brown, a Jesuite, and one Father Lewis, pretended Bishop of Lindaff, at the last Assizes at Lancaster; March 16th. The first for pretending to pray one Mrs Wilmot a poor Womans Husband at Liverpool, out of Purgatory, being on his sick Bed given over for dead, but yet recovered; and the other for Cheating one Mrs Newton, out of 15 l. and getting a Warrant of Attorney to Confess Judgment against her, for 15l. more, on pretence of praying her Father's Soul out of Purgatory, with the strange manner of their being detected in their notorious Cheats.

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The main Hinge that supports Popery, is Ignorance, which the Church of Rome to their great Interest and Profit finds to be the Mother of Devotion; or else they could never squeeze out of Peoples Pockets so much Money as they do, for Pardons, Indulgences, Masses, Satisfactory, Trentals, Agnus Dei's, Anniversaries Obits, Dirge's, Requiems, Tapers, and such like Trumperies, which wheedling Arts of Purse-milking Priests, and Romish Locusts is not to be born with in any Reformed Nation. Nay, so excessively greedy have these spiritual Vultures (who prey upon departed Sculs, as others on dead Carcasses, been in their Exactions, that they have studied the basest and most indirect Courses in the World, to gratifie their rapacious Desires, of which we have a multitude of Examples in History, but none more arch and frudulent, than these notorious Pranks acted very lately in Lancashire, by two Ghostly Cheats, called *Lewin Brown*, a Jesuite, and one Father *Lewis*, who by the Pope's Authority, styles and pretends himself to be the Bishop of *Lindaff in Wales*.

Now the first of these Vermin, *Lewin Brown* by Name, having received Orders in the Church of Rome, at the Seminary in St. Omers, in honour of propagating the Principles of the Whore of Babylon in a Protestant Nation, he attempted (altho so many strick Laws are made against Popish Recusants) to fix them in England, and about the beginning of January last, he came into this Kingdom, where he fixed himself in Lancashire, which County he thought the more convenient for his Purpose, as because there are more Families inclining to the Romish Perswasion, than in any other Shire in this Nation. So, sculking up and down there *incognito*, amongst the Papists for some time, he happened to introduce himself into the Acquaintance of one Mrs. *Wilmot*, a Taylor's Wife, who was a strong Romanist; altho her Husband was of the Church of England; in a little time it so happened, that Mr. *Wilmot* fell sick, even at Death's Door, and was given over by all his Physicians; whereupon this *Lewin Brown* the Jesuite, coming to and fro to the House in the time of his Visitation, and finding the poor Man in a manner gone, he perswaded the silly Woman to make some Provision for his Soul, in having it pray'd out of Purgatory.

Now Mr. *Wilmot's* Circumstances being very low thro' great Losses and Crosses, it was as much as he could do to leave enough behind him to lay him decently in the Ground, in case he died; however, his Wife being a strong and zealous Roman Catholick, upon the perswasion of the Priest, she was resolv'd to have her Husband's Soul saved from those feigned Flames which the Romish Clergy make the People believe they suffer after death; and in order thereto, having made a bargain before hand with the Priest, she went and borrow'd Three Pound of a Neighbour, and gave it him; the Priest went strait home, and to Prayers he went as hard as he could, and the next day came and told the Woman her Husband was saved. Saved, quoth the Woman, why my Husband's not dead yet. No matter for that, reply'd the Priest, let him dye when he will, they can't detain his Soul an hour in Purgatory, for St. Pet. has took the Minutes of his Case, and will give him Entrance to his Apartment at the first Knock. With this formal Story, Mrs. *Wilmot*, (who was devoutly bigotted to Popery) was very well satisfied, but it pleasing Providence, that her Husband recovered, within a little time after his being abroad, he was dunn'd for the Three Pound his Wife had borrow'd; which being unknown to him, he came home in a great Passion, asking his Wife what three Pounds this was she had run him in Debt the time of his Sickness, being sensible that he had so much

by him as to defray the Charges of his Affliction hitherto, without being beholding to any Body. His Wife was loth to confess her Folly, nor would not, till she was forced to thresh it out of her, and then she told him that what she had done was for his God, in giving it to an able Priest, to Pray him out of Purgatory; without telling him to whom. Hereupon the Taylor, (who as I said before was a Protestant) made no more Words on't, but went and acquainted a Justice of the Peace with the Imposture, who granted him a Warrant to apprehend the said *Lewin Brown*, whom he found in the Neighbourhood, confessing an old Woman, and with a Constable seizing him, they carry'd him before the said Justice, who committed him strait to Lancaster Goal, without admitting him any Bail or Mainprize.

The other, who was one Father *Lewis*, of the Society of Jesus too, made it his Practice likewise to skulk up and down amongst Popish Families in the same Neighbourhood, and the Father of a poor seduced Woman, one Mrs Newton, (that was a Papist) happening to dye about half a year since, the Daughter being very ignorantly devout, but of a very good Nature, having oft heard the frightful Stories the Torments endured in Purgatory, dismal set forth by the Priests, and fearing by his dissolute Life, that her Father might be dropt in there, (for dying however a true Roman Catholick, she thought there was no fear of any worse matter) she applied her self to this good Father, intreating his Prayers and Assistance to deliver her Father's Soul out of those Tortures. The Priest received the Proposal, asking 100 l. for the Jobb. But the poor Woman higling with him as well as she could, and with many Tears telling him, that 35 l. was all she had in the World, he at last agreed to take but 30 l. of her, and so they came to bargain, taking not only a Bond, but a Judgment thereupon for the Money. So he time being up, (which was but 3 days to do the Feat) the sent for his Ghostly Child, and solemnly assured her, her Father's Soul was happy. The Woman was mightily overjoy'd, but Father *Lewis* not so, for having paid him but half down, and not being in a Capacity at that time of paying him the rest, he threatened to Excommunicate her, and also fling her into Goal.

But Afterwards Mrs. *Newton* happening to marry a Protestant, who enquiring what was become of her Money, after some opportunity, she declared the whole Intrigue, and how she was 15 l. in Debt to the Priest still. Hereupon her Husband had her examined before a Magistrate upon Oath, and search being made after Father *Lewis*, he was quickly found, and Committed to his Brother in Lancaster Goal too.

And now this Lent Assizes coming on there, they were both brought to their Tryal, being Endicted for Treason, for that having received Orders from the pretended Authority of the See of Rome, they yet came over into, and continued in her Majesties Dominions, contrary to the Statute in that Case made and provided. There was very full and sufficient Evidence against them, though they with their usual Confidence, Impudence, and Obsturacy of such hypocritical Impostors, positively deny'd the r Crime, with many solemn Protestations, making this Plea for themselves, viz. *That the Evidence did not prove them Priests, because none could directly say, that they saw them receive Orders from the See of Rome.* At which rate, if that should be admitted, as their Exercising Priestly Functions, in Saying Mass, Consecrating the Eucharist, taking Confessions, Prescribing Penances, Giving Absolutions, and the like Acts, which none but a Priest may perform, why then, I say, if these are not Convincing Proofs, then that necessary Law would be totally eluded, and it would be impossible to Convict a Popish Priest. The Ghostly Fathers urged this Point farther, insisting, *That if their Priesthood was not proved, they then did appear but Cheats, and so ought not to be Convicted as Priests.* Thus it seems they were contented to be Lay-Cheats, but very loth for the Honour of Brotherhood, to be known to be Cheats Ecclesiastical. However, all their Pleas being in themselves frivolous, they were over-rul'd by the Court, and being fairly Convicted on full Evidence by an Impartial Jury, they received Sentence as follows.

That since they had the presumption to come into a Nation which is so very levere against all Popish Recusants being here; and to prevent the same, several Acts of Parliament are in force against them, in order to deter them from coming hither to sow their Damnable Doctrines, make Divisions amongst the People, and to entice them from their true Allegiance to their Lawful Sovereign, it is the Judgment of this Court, that for such their intolerable Impudence and Confidence, that they be carry'd from hence to the place from whence they came, and there to suffer and endure Imprisonment for their whole Lives; and if all their trifling Prayers and Superstitious Ceremonies, they can fairly pray themselves out of Goal, those that they have Cheated may yet have some Belief, that they can pray Souls out of Purgatory still.

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